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Morning Papers .. 1st June, 1939.  
Evening Papers .. 1st June, 1939.

RETAIL PRICES - MARCH QUARTER 1939.

Food and Rent (4 and 5 Roomed Houses) "B" Series.

Index numbers for March quarter 1939 (with base 1000 in 1923-27 for the six State Capitals) were Brisbane 870, Toowoomba 842, Rockhampton 854, Townsville 934, Bundaberg 813, Charters Towers 814, and Warwick 781.

From December quarter 1938 to March quarter 1939 there were substantial increases in this index in all seven cities, the percentages being Brisbane 3.69, Toowoomba 4.99, Rockhampton 3.77, Townsville 3.09, Bundaberg 3.17, Charters Towers 6.68, and Warwick 3.03. Food and grocery costs were higher in all cities. The Rent index rose in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Rockhampton, and Charters Towers, remained the same in Townsville, and declined in Bundaberg and Warwick. In Brisbane the most important increases in price between the months of December and March were for potatoes (a rise of 1/- for seven lb.), eggs (up  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. a dozen), and onions (up  $1\frac{3}{4}$ d. a lb.). Mutton showed the only decline of any importance (about  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. a lb.). The weighted average rent of four and five roomed houses in Brisbane rose slightly from 228.94d. to 229.70d. between November and February.

Compared with March Quarter 1938 the percentage increases in the Food and Rent Indexes were Brisbane 4.57, Toowoomba 4.73, Rockhampton 4.15, Townsville 4.83, Bundaberg 6.14, Charters Towers 10.30, and Warwick 11.10. Food and grocery indexes were higher in all cities than a year earlier, and rents also increased, though not to the same extent. In Brisbane the Food Index was up 6.12 per cent., and the rent index 2.16 per cent.. The most important price increases were potatoes (up 1/1 for seven lb.), onions (up  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. a lb.), butter (up 1d. a lb.), and beef (up  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. a lb.). Important decreases were eggs (down 4d. a dozen), and mutton (down nearly a  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a lb.). The average rent of 4 and 5 roomed houses rose from 224.98d. to 229.70d. between February 1938 and February 1939.

"All Items" - ("C" Series).

Index numbers for March quarter 1939 (with base 1000 in 1923-27 for the six State Capitals) were Brisbane 874, Toowoomba 863, Rockhampton 871, Townsville 923, Bundaberg 849, Charters Towers 878, and Warwick 830.

From December Quarter 1938 to March quarter 1939 there were increases in the "All Items" index in all cities, the percentages being Brisbane 2.22, Toowoomba 2.86, Rockhampton 2.23, Townsville 1.88, Bundaberg 1.80, Charters Towers 3.54, and Warwick 1.72. The increases were chiefly due to higher food and grocery costs, assisted, in four cities, by rises in rent. In Brisbane, food and grocery costs increased 5.87 per cent., rent of four and five roomed houses 0.35 per cent., and the cost of miscellaneous items (consisting of household drapery and hardware, fuel, light, union dues, lodge dues, fares, newspapers etc.) 0.21 per cent.. The index of costs of clothing and footwear did not alter.

Compared with March Quarter 1938, the "C" index was higher in all cities. The percentage increases were Brisbane 3.31, Toowoomba 2.62, Rockhampton 2.59, Townsville 3.13, Bundaberg 3.41, Charters Towers 5.91, and Warwick 6.41. In Brisbane food and grocery costs increased 6.12 per cent., rent of four and five roomed houses 2.16 per cent., clothing and footwear 1.97 per cent., and miscellaneous items 0.85 per cent.. The indexes for food and groceries, rent, and clothing and footwear were higher in all cities than a year ago. The miscellaneous group index was slightly higher in Brisbane, Charters Towers, and Warwick; but declined in Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Townsville and Bundaberg.

Compared with March quarter 1933, when the Brisbane index reached the lowest point recorded in the depression years (747), the index was higher by 17.00 per cent..

Comparison of Costs in the Queensland Cities.

The following table shows the amounts necessary in March quarter 1939 to purchase what would have cost £1 in Brisbane.

City	All Items	Food and Groceries	Rent (4 and 5 Rooms)	Clothing and Footwear
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Brisbane ..	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0
Toowoomba ..	19. 9	19. 0	19. 11	1. 0. 0
Rockhampton ..	19. 11	1. 0. 10	17. 8	1. 0. 5
Townsville ..	1. 1. 1	1. 2. 3	1. 0. 2	1. 0. 4
Bundaberg ..	19. 5	1. 1. 0	15. 0	1. 0. 3
Charters Towers	1. 0. 1	1. 2. 2	13. 1	1. 0. 6
Warwick ..	19. 0	19. 8	15. 2	19. 11

Comparison of Commonwealth and States Basic Wages.

In the following statement the present State Basic Wage of £4. 1. 0 in Brisbane is compared in the first column with the amounts required to purchase the same amount of commodities in the other capitals. The second column shows the actual State Basic wages and the third the actual Commonwealth Basic wages in the capitals. All comparisons are on the basis of March quarter 1939 index numbers.

Capital	Equivalent of £4. 1. 0 in Brisbane a.	State Basic Wage b.	Commonwealth Basic Wage c.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Brisbane ..	4. 1. 0	4. 1. 0	3. 17. 0
Sydney ..	4. 6. 7	d.	4. 2. 0
Melbourne ..	4. 5. 6	e.	4. 1. 0
Adelaide ..	4. 4. 2	3. 18. 0	3. 18. 0
Perth ..	4. 3. 0	4. 2. 2	3. 17. 0
Hobart ..	4. 3. 6	e.	3. 17. 0

- Based on "All Items" index ("C" Series).
- Current Rates.
- Corresponding to March quarter "Court" index numbers with the addition of the special loadings. To be operative from beginning of first pay period in June.
- The Basic Wage of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration is adopted in State awards.
- No State wage actually declared but follows Commonwealth rates to a large extent,

COLIN CLARK

GOVERNMENT STATISTICIAN.

GOVERNMENT STATISTICIAN'S OFFICE,

BRISBANE.

30th May, 1939.



## RETAIL PRICES INDEXES.

Table No. 1. FOOD, GROCERIES AND RENT (4 AND 5 ROOMED HOUSES) - "B" SERIES.

(Base = 1000 in 1923-27 in Six State Capitals)

CITY	Year Ending Decr. 1928	Year Ending Decr. 1938	Year Ending March 1939	QUARTERS ENDING				
				March 1938	June 1938	Sept. 1938	Decr. 1938	March 1939
Brisbane ..	901	838	847	832	834	845	839	870
Toowoomba ..	833	806	816	804	804	814	802	842
Rockhampton ..	858	825	833	820	826	829	823	854
Townsville ..	1047	900	911	891	899	905	906	934
Bundaberg ..	(b)	781	793	766	780	791	788	813
Weighted Average -								
Five Towns (a)	892	837	846	831	834	844	838	869
Charters Towers	942	751	770	738	745	756	763	814
Warwick ..	841	732	752	703	714	754	758	781

Table No. 2.

## THE "ALL ITEMS" INDEX - "C" SERIES.

(Base = 1000 in 1923-27 in Six State Capitals)

CITY	Year Ending Decr. 1928	Year Ending Decr. 1938	Year Ending March 1939	QUARTERS ENDING				
				March 1938	June 1938	Sept. 1938	Decr. 1938	March 1939
Brisbane ..	917	852	859	846	850	858	855	874
Toowoomba ..	906	843	848	841	844	846	839	863
Rockhampton ..	903	853	859	849	854	857	852	871
Townsville ..	1023	902	909	895	901	905	906	923
Bundaberg ..	(b)	831	838	821	833	835	834	849
Weighted Average -								
Five Towns (a)	915	854	861	849	853	859	856	875
Charters Towers	925	839	851	829	836	843	848	878
Warwick ..	914	800	812	780	789	813	816	830

(a) Prior to 1937 the five towns in the weighted averages included Charters Towers and Warwick which have now been replaced by Townsville and Bundaberg.

(b) Prices for Bundaberg were not collected prior to September Quarter 1936.

Table No. 3.

## AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES - FOOD AND GROCERIES

## Brisbane.

Commodity and Unit of Quantity			MONTH OF			Commodity and Unit of Quantity			MONTH OF		
			March 1938	Decr. 1938	March 1939				March 1938	Decr. 1938	March 1939
Bread ..	2 lb.	d.	5.48	5.50	5.50	Milk ..	1 quart	d.	5.90	6.00	6.00
Flour ..	2 lb.	d.	3.80	3.95	4.05	Bacon (Rashers)	1 lb.	d.	15.14	14.73	14.50
Tea ..	1 lb.	d.	27.23	27.05	26.95	Beef - Sirloin					
Sugar ..	1 lb.	d.	3.98	3.98	3.98	Roast ..	1 lb.	d.	8.35	8.80	8.75
Jam (Plum)	1½ lb.	d.	7.98	7.95	8.15	Beef - Steak					
Raisins ..	1 lb.	d.	10.23	10.64	10.64	Rump ..	1 lb.	d.	11.10	11.35	11.50
Potatoes ..	7 lb.	d.	9.77	10.73	22.82	Beef - Rolled					
Onions ..	1 lb.	d.	2.23	1.95	3.73	Brisket	1 lb.	d.	5.55	5.45	5.60
Soap ..	1 lb.	d.	6.33	6.18	6.15	Mutton - Leg	1 lb.	d.	7.95	7.85	7.65
Butter ..	1 lb.	d.	18.05	19.00	19.00	Mutton - Chops					
Cheese ..	1 lb.	d.	12.91	13.27	13.27	Loin ..	1 lb.	d.	7.95	7.75	7.60
Eggs ..	1 doz.	d.	23.14	16.82	19.27	Pork - Leg	1 lb.	d.	10.75	11.55	11.45